

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 178749

EXDIS - LUXEMBOURG FOR MOOSE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, FR, SS

SUBJECT: SAHARAN PEACE PROSPECTS

REF: STATE 177978

1. WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS SCHEDULED TO BE MEETING WITH MOROCCAN AND ALGERIAN LEADERS AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE TO BE TALKING WITH MOROCCANS, BOTH WITHIN NEXT TEN DAYS, DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE RAPID READOUT OF FRENCH ATTITUDES TOWARD CURRENT SITUATION IN NORTHWEST AFRICA. EMBASSY REQUESTED MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS IN EX-
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CHANGES WITH APPROPRIATE FRENCH OFFICIALS.

2. MAURITANIA'S NEW LEADERS HAVE INDICATED TO USG THAT THEY WANT AN EARLY END TO THE SAHARA CONFLICT AND AS PART OF A PEACE SETTLEMENT APPEAR PREPARED TO WITHDRAW FROM THAT PORTION OF THE SAHARA ANNEXED BY OULD DADDAH REGIME IF INDIGENOUS POPULATION CONTINUES TO OPPOSE MAURITANIAN

ANNEXATION. HOWEVER, THEY ARE APPREHENSIVE ABOUT MOROCCO'S ATTITUDE AND APPARENTLY HAVE NOT MUSTERED THE NERVE TO MAKE THESE POINTS WITH RABAT.

3. WE ARE AWARE THAT THERE HAVE BEEN EXPLORATORY TALKS ON A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT BETWEEN MOROCCAN AND ALGERIAN EMIS-

SARIES. WE ARE NOT WELL INFORMED ON THEIR PROGRESS BUT HAVE THE IMPRESSION AGREEMENT REMAINED DISTANT WHEN THE MAURITANIAN COUP OCCURRED.

4. THE U.S. SUPPORTS A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. SAUNDERS AND MOOSE WILL URGE ALGIERS AND RABAT TO RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES PEACEFULLY WHEN IN NORTH AFRICA. WE DO NOT FEEL WE ARE WELL PLACED TO DESIGN A PEACE PROPOSAL OR TO ACT AS AN INTERMEDIARY. WE UNDERSTAND THE FRENCH HAVE GIVEN SOME THOUGHT TO THE POSSIBLE ELEMENTS OF A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, AND MIGHT BE MORE INCLINED THAN WE ARE TO SERVE AS INTERMEDIARY, AT LEAST BETWEEN NOUAKCHOTT AND RABAT.

5. THE U.S. WISHES TO CONSULT CLOSELY WITH FRANCE ON THIS ISSUE AND WOULD BE PREPARED TO WORK TO SUPPORT FRENCH DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO PROMOTE A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE SAHARA CONFLICT. WE WOULD APPRECIATE LEARNING MORE ABOUT FRANCE'S ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION AND ARE
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PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN FRENCH VIEWS ON WHAT HASSAN IS LIKELY TO DO WHEN HE LEARNS THAT MAURITANIA'S NEW RULERS MAY BE PREPARED TO LEAVE THE SAHARA, IF NECESSARY TO END THE WAR. SHOULD FRENCH SEE SOME SCOPE FOR COORDINATED DIPLOMATIC ACTION IN SUPPORT OF A PEACE SETTLEMENT, MOOSE COULD DISCUSS THIS ON JULY 18 BEFORE HIS NORTH AFRICAN VISIT AND INFORM SAUNDERS BEFORE SAUNDERS' ARRIVAL IN RABAT. CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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